

Appl. No. 10/661,159
Amdt. dated 7/14/06
Reply to Office action of 2/14/06

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Three sheets of drawings are attached. The sheets include changes to FIGS. 12A and 12B; FIG. 12G, and FIG. 12H.

FIG. 12A has been edited to add an additional line from the reference numeral "40" to the drawing feature identified in paragraph 53 of the specification as "cable 40."

FIG. 12B has been edited to add reference numerals "115" and "117" for the "rack lifter 115" and "lift tab 117" referred to in paragraph 61 of the specification.

FIG. 12G has been edited to add two instances of the reference numeral "110" for the "sliding stop structure 110" referred to in paragraph 65 of the specification.

FIG. 12H has been edited to add the reference numeral "110" for the "sliding stop structure 110" referred to in paragraph 65 of the specification.

Attachments: 3 Replacement Sheets

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Remarks/Arguments

The rejections and comments of the Examiner set forth in the Office Action dated February 14, 2006 have been carefully reviewed by the Applicant. A number of errors in the specification and drawings have also been corrected. Paragraph [0063] has been amended to change the incorrect reference "shuttle 95" to the correct reference "shuttle 93." Prior reference to "shuttle 93" may be found in paragraph [0060], and several prior references to "handle 95" may be found in paragraph [0063].

Claims 1-2, 4-8 and 10-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Zehel et al. (5251611). Claims 1-6, 16, and 17 have been canceled. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 7 and 10-15 on the grounds that Zehel fails to anticipate each and every element of Claims 7 and 10-15. Specifically, Zehel fails to anticipate "laterally parallel" rigidizing sections. The rejection holds that "Zehel et al. show the first and second rigidizing sections that are coaxial and laterally parallel (Figure 1)."

As shown in FIGs. 3, 8, 9, and 11, and described in paragraph 43 of the present application, "coaxial" and "laterally parallel" are alternative embodiments that are mutually exclusive. A "coaxial" structure has a single common axis, whereas a "laterally parallel" structure has two adjacent and parallel structures. Zehel does not use the term "laterally parallel," and the Applicant has adopted the term to specifically distinguish a pair of adjacent and parallel structures from a pair of coaxial structures.

The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 8 on the grounds that Zehel fails to anticipate each and every

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element of Claim 8. Specifically, Zehel fails to anticipate "a pulley at a distal end of said linkage sheath." Zehel refers to a "pulley" at col. 7, line 45 and col. 11, line 3; however, Zehel is silent as to how a pulley is to be incorporated in the device.

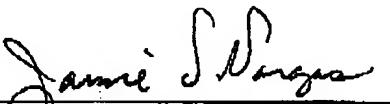
Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zehel et al. In response to the rejection, claim 3 has been canceled.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zehel et al. in view of Secrest et al. (6666847). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection on the grounds that neither Zehel nor Secrest suggests the claimed combination. As noted above, Zehel fails to teach "a pulley at a distal end of said linkage sheath." Further, at col. 6, line 59 and col. 8, Zehel teaches that the cables are attached to the distal end. Although Secrest discloses a pulley at the distal end of the device, Secrest is silent with respect to the use of a pulley for tensioning. The combination of Secrest with Zehel in effect contravenes an explicit teaching of Zehel with respect to the distal configuration of his device.

In summary, Applicant asserts that Claims 7-15 are in condition for allowance and earnestly solicits such action by the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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